643 The king has authority in matters pertaining to the cult. For
656 example, in 1906 he forbade old women to smoke tobacco. This command was scrupulously observed, for people were afraid that those who did not comply would die. The pipes were placed on the hilltops where they were still to be seen at the time of my journey (1907).

644 At the court of the king a fire is always kept burning by
372 Batwa. Eight or nine months before my arrival in Nyanza the fire
687 went out as a result of the carelessness of the watchmen, and they
778 had to forfeit their lives for it. The sacred fire is also said to be kept burning in Kiziba, but there it has to be brought anew each year from the Sese Islands.

766 The ordinary verb "to die" can not be applied to the king.
643 After his death the king is not buried but mummified over the fire. When the body is completely dessicated, it is burned along
715 with his hut, so not a trace remains. The kings are said to live on as leopards after death.

643 A son of the deceased king is his successor. He need not be
578 the eldest, nor is he, as a rule. The uncertainty concerning the successor to the throne causes internal strife in Ruanda, laying the country open to attacks from the outside in the interval between the death of the old king and the establishment of the new ruler.

643 There are, however, some regulations which eliminate certain categories of royal sons from the list of pretenders. Thus, a man dedicated to Ryangombe is said to be incapable of "eating the drum" (becoming king). This is said to have been the case with Ishirangabo, for example, the brother of Musinga who, in his day, guided Lieutenant Count Von Götzen. The princes whose mothers have died are also reputedly unable to "eat the drum."

[256] As a result of this situation, children are often appointed kings with an uncle or brother of the queen mother as regent. This happened to Musinga, for example, whose uncle Kabare for a time exercised the ruling power in his stead.

643 When he begins his reign, the new king and his mother as well
551 change their names. Thus, Musinga became Juhi Musinga, and his
644 mother, Kanzogera became Nyina Juhi. The queen mother and the regent are given all the honors of a king during the king's minority.

643 Another thing that reduces the number of pretenders -- this
644 weakest aspect of the African state -- is the limited number of sons

9: Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

There is as much as a one-month range of variations in the dates of the rainy and dry seasons each year. The precipitations are very irregular. Sometimes for a few weeks there is heavy rainfall lasting ten or twelve hours followed by a few dry days, at other times there is a 2- or 3-hour shower every day. Besides this fundamental irregularity there is no uniformity throughout the country. Owing to the very uneven relief, neighbouring regions or even neighbouring groups of hills and valleys, may have quite dissimilar climates.

Although it is believed that the country was covered with forest in the remote past, now only three per cent. of the surface of Ruanda is woodland; even if savannah with trees is taken into account the figure is not brought up to more than 6·5 per cent.[4] At the beginning of the century the figures were almost certainly not higher, and very likely lower. Indeed, the policy of the Administration has been to attempt to protect by regulation the forests which were left and to promote the replanting of trees. The present-day typical Ruanda landscape, eucalyptus-covered hills and roads bordered by three or four lines of trees, is new. Fifty years ago the country had an even more denuded appearance than it has today.

The result of the scarcity of trees in a country of steep hills has been erosion. Torrential rainfall has washed off the more fertile top soil. The deterioration of the ground has been a long process which has not yet been reversed. The north-western part of Ruanda provides an exception to the general poverty. Here the soil is of volcanic origin, formed from recent lava, and rich. The land at the bottom of valleys everywhere is, of course, notably better than on the slopes.

A good top-soil is important not only for cultivation: allowing a slow infiltration of water, it helps to form subterranean watersheds situated not too deeply underground. A decrease in this top-soil has had the effect that some of these practically superficial water reserves which feed sources have drained away. I have been told more than once by old people that in such or such a place there was a water source when they were young. When digging a well now one has to go very deep.

These phenomena, erosion, impoverishment of soil, and drying up of sub-soil, are not to be attributed only to the action of the purely natural factors mentioned (the heavy rainfalls and the

[4] Ministère des Colonies, 1951b, p. 331.